

SCAAC Meeting Minutes

(School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council)

September 29, 1999
State Board Room

SCAAC Agenda

#	Agenda Items	Presenters
1.	Meeting Minutes	Anne Keene
2.	Benchmarking	Betty Edwards/ Rhonda Sims
3.	Communications Plan	Robyn Oatley
4.	Interim Accountability Model	Scott Trimble
5.	703 KAR 5:020 Regulation	Scott Trimble
6.	Pacesetter Schools Concept	Scott Trimble
7.	Student Accountability/Motivation	Scott Trimble
Adjournment		

SCAAC Meeting Minutes
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Copies of audiotapes of the meeting are available upon request.
Chairman Anne Keene called the meeting to order. The roll was called.

Members Present:

Jamie Bowling	Maxie Johnson	Gary Mielcarek
Dale Campbell	Benny Lile	Maynard Thomas
Kay Freeland	Bonnie Lynch	Bob Young
Suzanne Guyer		

A quorum was present. Benny Lile asked each Council member to introduce themselves. One new member was introduced, Mr. Dale Campbell who represents principals; Dale is principal at Central Hardin.

School Curriculum Assessment and Accountability Council
FINAL MINUTES
September 29, 1999

Chairperson Benny Lile called the meeting to order; the following members were present:

Kay Freeland
Suzanne Guyer
Jamie Bowling
Maxie Johnson
Dale Campbell
Maynard Thomas
Bob Young
Benny Lile
Bonnie Lynch
Gary Mielcarek

A quorum was present. Benny Lile asked each Council member to introduce themselves. One new member was introduced, Mr. Dale Campbell who represents principals; Dale is principal at Central Hardin.

The Chair recognized Scott Trimble, Associate Commissioner in the Office of Assessment and Accountability. Scott presented an organizational chart of the personnel in the OAA (Office of Assessment and Accountability) noting changes in the personnel.

The Chair introduced Helen Mountjoy, Chairperson of the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). Helen summarized the actions of KBE since the last meeting of SCAAC. She reported that the Interim Accountability Model was unanimously accepted. She also summarized the latest NAEP report on Kentucky achievement. She also noted that during its recent retreat the Board spent most of its time discussing assessment and accountability issues; Helen also emphasized that the major concern for future discussions and actions was standard setting and examining the performance levels and definitions of those standards and levels. The Board plans to do take a thorough look at the levels of performance, to ask for research into this issue, and to communicate this information to the public. Other issues that will be on the table include district accountability, student accountability, and the longitudinal model for comparison of scores.

Chairperson Benny Lile congratulated KDE for the hard work that went into meeting the September 15 deadline for score reports.

Bob Young asked if there were plans to appoint new members to the Council for any vacancies. Scott Trimble noted that 17 were required by statute and that Governor Patton would make those appointments.

Benny Lile introduced Tom Peterson for discussion on the Scholastic Audit. Tom handed out copies of the proposed plans for establishing and implementing the Scholastic Audit and draft copies of the proposed regulation. Tom highlighted the major sections of the Staff Note on Scholastic Audit and commented on them. Groups consulted and having input into the process include: KDE Regional Service Center Staff; Learning Support Services Bureau; the Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council, KASSP , JCPS , and Consolidated Planning Advisory Council. Tom also led the Council through the draft of 703 KAR 5:120 relating to Scholastic Audit.

Discussion followed. Kay Freeland asked where the teacher accountability piece was in the regulation; she noted that if leadership is accountable and can be removed from their positions, that it only seems equitable that teachers should also be held to that same standard of accountability. Kay feels that for the regulation to have impact teachers must also be included in a similar manner. Helen Mountjoy asked Kay if she had a suggestion for how this might be incorporated into the regulation. Discussion followed. Dale Campbell expressed his feeling that there must be a balance in sharing the accountability and consequences for poor or unacceptable practices and results. Council member Gary Mielcarek asked Tom Peterson why teachers were omitted from the document. Tom said that he felt the authors of the regulation had felt teachers were included and that there was no conscious intention to exclude teachers. Council members Maxie Johnson and Bob Young expressed their opinion that the regulation doesn't exclude teachers from the consequences, rather evaluations of teachers are and should be on-going and that principals and superintendents have the power to sanction or dismiss teachers who are not doing their parts. More discussion followed.

Council member Maynard Thomas asked how a district could get rid of a teacher. Bob Young suggested that the best way to do this is to intervene early in the teacher's career before that teacher become tenured. Discussion continued.

Dale Campbell asked Tom Peterson asked what was in the "School Portfolio" which would not be in the Report Card or Consolidated Plan.

Benny Lile asked if there were specific language in the regulation which would allow a school to appeal the findings of the School Audit on the status of the a school's performance. Scott Trimble noted that generally there were steps for appealing

classifications and it would seem that this same principle would apply to any performance classification.

Benny Lile asked if a school could call into play the Scholastic Audit even if the school did not qualify under the provisions of the regulation? It was noted that schools use the tools available and conduct their own scholastic audit for the purpose of comparison and planning.

Bob Young asked how soon it would be possible to apply for the training provided for in the regulation. The training is now slated for April and May 2000.

Chairperson Benny Lile recessed the Council for ten minutes.

Following the recess, Benny Lile asked if the Council had any official action it wished to take. Gary Mielcarek moved that Scholastic Audit regulation include “teachers” as well as administrators. The motion was seconded by Maynard Thomas. Bob Young asked that since the language of the regulation had as an option demotion, how could a teacher be demoted. Suggestions for how to treat this issue with teachers included reassignment to a classified position or mandatory professional development or working under a master teacher. Discussion followed. Roll call vote followed; seven members voted for the motion, two voted no and one member abstained. Voting yes: Jamie Bowling, Kay Freeland, Benny Lile, Bonnie Lynch, Gary Mielcarek, Maynard Thomas, and Dale Campbell; Voting no: Maxie Johnson and Bob Young; Abstaining: Suzanne Guyer. The motion passed. KBE Chairperson Helen Mountjoy asked the KBE be provided with a copy for its October meeting (Oct. 5-8).

Rationale: principle stakeholders in the process should share equally in the responsibility for a schools performance.

Chairperson Benny Lile recognized Robyn Oatley from KDE Office of Communications and Community Relations for a report. Robyn handed out a copy of “Testing in Kentucky: Keys to Understanding Accountability.” Suzanne Guyer requested that sufficient copies be sent out for all school staff members to have a copy. Robyn also reported that at Dr. Cody’s request a survey was sent out regarding student accountability. Of the comments received, the most frequently mentioned was including KCCT scores as part of the consideration for Commonwealth scholarship funds.

Robyn gave Council members copies of the School Report Card Document along with an instructional document accompanying it. Robyn highlighted the major sections of the document and answered questions. Suzanne Guyer suggested that the student teacher ratio data should be included on the expanded report card since the data could easily be misunderstood. It was noted that her suggestion would be considered during

development of the 2000-2001 document. Maynard Thomas suggested that the school report card should have a demographic break out of indicating numbers of minority student, teachers and administrators. It noted that his suggestion would be considered for the next round of developing these documents.

Chairperson Benny Lile recessed the Council for lunch.

Following the lunch recess, Chairperson Benny Lile reconvened the Council. A discussion followed concerning the frequency of Council meetings and how often it would advantageous to meet. Scott Trimble expressed his desire that the Council meet every two months if possible. The following dates were agreed upon: November 30, 1999; January 25, 2000; and March 28, 2000.

Benny Lile recognized Scott Trimble to begin the afternoon agenda items. The first topic was district accountability. Scott outlined the following concerns which the Council had previously discussed: that districts be accountable only for those things they are able to control; that resources be used in an equitable process; that staff and personnel evaluations be done in a fair and consistent manner; that the district take responsibility for professional and staff development. Scott also mentioned the concern about school safety issues as a possible topic for consideration. Recognition for districts who meet goals or make progress was also discussed. Scott highlighted the draft regulation on district accountability discussing all the major sections of the proposed regulation. (All Council members had copies of the draft regulation—KRS 158:6455(6)).

Following the highlights of the regulation, Bob Young asked if there would overlap in audit team membership or use of the same resources in a management audit and in the Scholastic Audit. Scott noted that the best scenario would be to avoid any overlap or conflict in the processes of either. Bob also asked if there were or would be provisions for punitive actions such as removal or demotion of any persons. It was generally agreed that the two are totally separate processes which would require two different sets of committee members and the outcomes would certainly be different. Scott Trimble expressed his opinion that there should not be any conflict or competition between these two kinds of audit activities either regarding use of committee members or other kinds of resources needed for the processes.

Kay Freeland expressed gratitude for how well KDE handled the language in section 4 of the draft regulation on district accountability (KRS 158:6455(6)). Maynard Thomas asked if there were any enforcement which impacts districts who do not comply with or properly file Consolidated Plans. Discussion followed. Maynard Thomas asked what the consequences would be for a district whose minority or special populations' achievement was unsatisfactory? Is this data something we would look at as part of the district accountability process. Bob Young asked if there would be district accountability in cases where some specific student population was falling below the

achievement level of the general population? Scott Trimble noted that in this regulation that is not a factor.

Benny Lile asked if there would be a large number of small districts declared as “successful schools” basically due to the numbers as opposed to larger districts who might not have as many schools designated as “successful.” Discussion followed.

The Council moved on to the next agenda item—student accountability. Scott Trimble addressed this topic. Benny Lile noted that the KBE is adamant about student accountability; however, the problem is how to deal with it.

Scott led the Council through the KBE Staff Note on Student Accountability, highlighting the major concepts. The Staff Note notes that schools would have to identify a set of “Gateway Skills”—those skills students will be required to pass; these would be developed locally at least in reading and mathematics. Students would have to demonstrate these “Skills” in order to participate in middle school and high school. Other options discussed in the Staff Note included:

- school will score students on the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) and apply results to course grades
- KEES Scholarship amounts, in part, will be based on student performance on the KCCT (graduated scale results in greater rewards for higher performance)
- by 2001 a high school student transcript will contain indicators of performance on all or parts of the CATS
- extended school services for students scoring low on the CTBS/5 or KCCT (Novice level) in reading and mathematics with requirement to participate in compulsory ESS.

Suzanne Guyer questioned the feasibility of actually locally scoring KCCT responses. She raised the questions of the logistical problems which this would entail; Benny Lile also noted the time factor involved and how much time is already taken up on the schedule with the two week testing window. Dale Campbell asked why the “Gateway Skills” would be locally determined rather than statewide consistency of what these “Skills” were or need to be.

Maxie Johnson asked if funding would be provided for this testing and the time to score. Benny Lile asked when this Staff Note would go before the KBE; Scott said it would go to the Board at its meeting next week. Kay Freeland noted the language in the Staff Note which suggests that KBE might need to seek changes in the compulsory attendance laws to assure local district has the authority to require extended attendance. This is another major consideration that must be examined in considering feasibility. Maynard Thomas asked if the scholarship provisions in the Note would taken into consideration the various levels or standards used to score the assessment.

The following issues were noted for further consideration:

1. what discrepancies might exist district and statewide if the “Gateway Skills” are determined at each district rather than statewide.
2. what are the ramifications on numbers and enrollment if students are retained at the middle school or elementary school
3. what kinds of alternative curricula would be necessary for retained or passed on students and what would be the costs
4. how schools deal with students with disabilities who need accommodations and modifications; wouldn't these students need some form of alternative assessment
5. would there be much more paperwork to deal with
6. would remedial programs be needed for retained or passed on students

Chairperson Benny Lile called a recess.

The Chair reconvened following the recess.

Benny Lile called for comments on the extended school year and ESS section of the Staff Note on Student:

1. what effect would alternative calendars have
2. what transportation cost for rural
3. would intersessions be a better option than ESS
4. there may be a lack of teachers who would be available for extended school sessions
5. what would be the exit criteria; when could the student move forward
6. what effect would student attitudes have on the concept of extended school time

Comments on using KCCT as a tie into grades:

1. costs and management issues
2. loss of instructional time
3. costs of tests and security of test materials
4. how to weight the grades and at what value would these grades be added into the course average
5. need to define the components which would be included for this credit
6. could a common question be used to score for all students—no common question will be on the spring 2000 test and this would require significant changes
7. could the multiple choice be used for this purpose
8. what courses would the KCCT test result be tied to—where would the grades be counted?

Kay Freeland asked if it were possible for the state to take a stand on student accountability? Discussion followed. Maynard asked if test scores indicated if student accountability or motivation were really issues. Discussion followed.

The Council next discussed the performance standards topic on the agenda. Scott Trimble highlighted portions of the Staff Note on resetting performance standards on the KCCT (KRS 158:6455(6)). Scott reported that the KBE has decided to stay with the four levels or standards of performance---Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished. Include on the last page of the Staff Note is a description of each performance level. Scott asked the Council to respond to the descriptions.

Dale Campbell: would the low, medium, and high designations still remain within each standard?

Scott: these would stay and would require a change in regulation to remove them.

Bob Young: the meaning of the third bullet under Distinguished seems unclear; it would seem that the word but should be both.

It was agreed this was an error.

Maynard Thomas: are these descriptors usable with parents?

Scott: these definitions are related to Core Content for Assessment and it would difficult to alter them for all audiences.

Scott led the Council through the steps of standard setting procedures included in the Staff Note.

Maynard Thomas asked Scott Trimble if changing the standards would in any way inflate test scores. Scott answered that it would never raise nor lower the scores. Maynard's concern is the appearance that we may have lowered our standards. Discussion followed on the issue of whether or not standards are too tough.

Kay Freeland questioned whether the teachers who would work on standard setting would be only those teachers in the given content areas of their expertise.

Chairperson Benny Lile asked Scott Trimble what the role of SCAAC would be in the standards setting process. The role of SCAAC will continue to be advisory and the Council will be involved through the steps as outlined as discussions move forward and the standards are reset.

The Council began discussion on longitudinal assessment. Council member were given copies of the Staff Note on Longitudinal Assessment, and Scott Trimble outlined the major points. Scott noted that the interest in developing a longitudinal assessment remains very strong. He also noted that a study is being designed and much would depend on funding in the future.

Benny Lile asked for clarification on the plan to test fifth graders and the forms of the test that would be administered and the timeline involved. Benny's concern is about the level of preparation and isolating just certain questions or kinds of knowledge for

students to study or being drilled on in preparation for the testing. Suzanne Guyer expressed some reservations about the ease with which some content areas can be prepared for, especially mathematics.

Chairperson Benny Lile recognized Dr. Linda Houghton, Associate Commissioner who addressed the Council on student motivation; combining opportunities to learn with success in achieving proficiency on the KCCT. The process involves clear expectations: establishing checklists/check points; assessing student performance; correlation between benchmarks and performance at the proficient level. The larger goal is that every school will average proficient in language arts and mathematics. The larger goal applies to individual students as well. The end result if the objective is achieved will be that every student will leave school at proficient levels and be able to enter college without remediation. The assessment would include administration of the NRT at the end of primary and grade six; administration of the KCCT in mathematics at grades five and eight and in reading at grades four and seven; re-administration of the KCCT at grades five and eight in mathematics and reading; development of individual success plan; benchmarks for student success. The process would involve appropriate professional development in using the marker papers or benchmarks as well as in developing individual success plans for students.

Following Dr. Houghton's presentation the following concerns were raised: Kay Freeland see this kind of approach as a total departure from where we were when reform was enacted; Suzanne Guyer expressed concern over re-testing fifth graders with the same fourth grade test. In response Dr. Houghton noted that these concepts are guidelines and options to address a problem. She further noted that the Department is working closely with primary educators to address these concerns. It was also emphasized that all these discussions are very much in the formative and discussion phases.

Chairperson Benny Lile adjourned the meeting at 4:00 PM.

Total Time: 7 hours

